

## EDITORIAL

With Hartley Coles



# We're in good hands

Now that the votes are counted and feelings nearly normal, maybe it's time to apply some hindsight to the results of the election for Halton Hills council.

Perhaps to the surprise of Acton (Ward 1) voters who gave Pam Johnson the nod, veteran councillor Marilyn Serjeantson left the other seven candidates in her wake as she captured the mayor's chair. Marilyn won only Ward 4 but she had the confidence of 3,218 voters in the four wards, which was enough margin to leave a gap of almost 400 votes between her and nearest challenger, Mike Armstrong.

Armstrong was the big surprise in the '94 election, starting late in the race but mustering strong support in Wards 2 and 3 where he topped the polls. If the campaign had gone on longer, who knows what would have happened.

In any event only 38 per cent of almost 30,000 voters in town bothered to register their vote. The disappointing turnout suggests that the 62 per cent who didn't bother to vote were either satisfied with the status quo or felt the number of candidates for mayor was too confusing to select just one. I'm inclined to support the latter theory, but the votes in all four wards for councillors show strong support for the incumbents and the status quo.

Really there's very little change on council. Gone are Mayor Russ Miller and Counc. Gail Rutherford, both of whom retired, and Counc. Pam Johnston, who pulled up third in the mayor's race.

All three Acton councillors were easily returned, Rick Bonnette to the Region with 1,528 votes to challenger Jean Hilborn's 348. Norm Elliott and Gerald Rennie opened wide margins over Rebecca Drotos, fighting her first campaign.

The rural vote was the only squeaker. Rob Heaton, described as a "loose cannon" by those who felt he marched to the beat of a different drummer, was returned along with Kathy Gastle. Kevin Kuiack offered a strong challenge - he trailed the tied incumbents' 1,201 votes by only 23.

The makeup of council suggest that plans for Acton development and the long delayed construction of a new arena will go ahead providing all necessary approvals are received. Serjeantson has publicly declared she will continue to work in Acton's interests as she has in the past.

As one who has watched her performance on council over the last 17 years, I do believe the voters' confidence is justified. Marilyn Serjeantson's experience and her voting record on important issues has been solid. She is not a wing nut beat on having her ego stroked, but a conscientious councillor who should easily take over the mayor's duties after the usual break-in period.

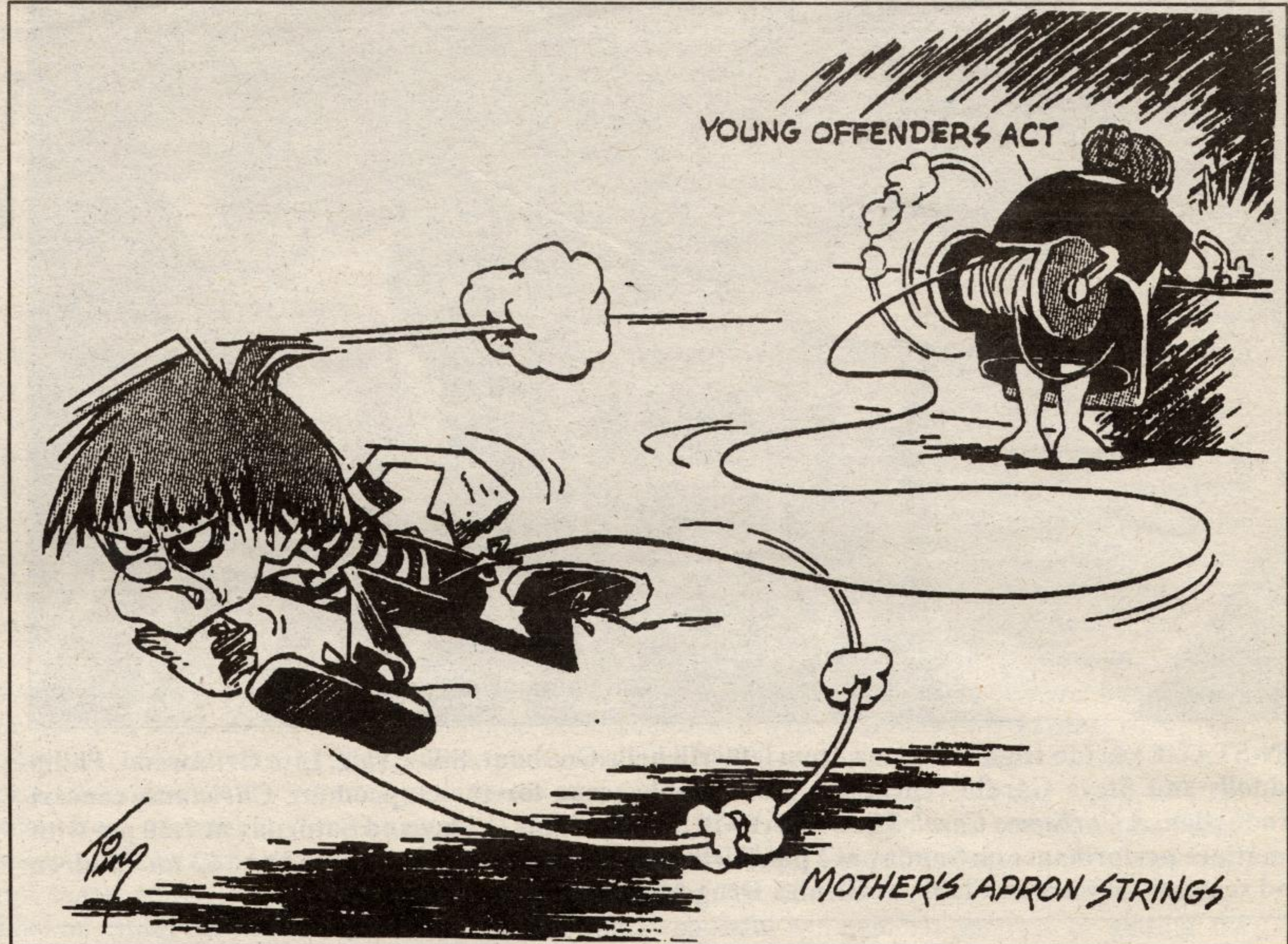
During the election campaign there was some speculation about her ability to lead what might have been a fractious council because she doesn't thunder from Mount Olympus. But quiet, well-spoken resolve is often more effective. All three re-elected Acton councillors have noted they are "comfortable" with Serjeantson at the helm.

Some may argue that "comfortable" is a pejorative term for a council who, instead of comforting the afflicted, should be afflicting the comfortable. But that's a semantic exercise. Councils invariably work best when there's little friction and all feel comfortable expressing their opinions.

In this writer's opinion the mayor-elect's most engaging qualification for the job is her openness and access - both requisites for a Town of this size. They were assets which made Russ Miller a popular mayor and which helped him win a seat on the Hydro commission. If Serjeantson, the first woman to sit in the mayor's chair in Halton Hills, wants to retain voter support over the three-year term, she could well follow the example of her predecessor.

Acton voters' confidence in their three councillors was evident in the election results. They have worked hard persuading colleagues to accept an Acton agenda. Dubbed "the three musketeers," their show of unity has antagonized colleagues on council who don't always share their viewpoint, but it has been effective at wearing down the opposition.

If you don't like the configuration of the new council, it's just too bad. They'll be there for the next three years. In my opinion, to paraphrase one insurance company's slogan, "You're in good hands with All Mate."



## LETTERS

### Thanks for support!

To the Editor,

On Sept. 18, the 14th Annual Terry Fox Run was held at the Acton High track, where participants, volunteers and supporters joined together to continue their commitment and dedication to Terry's dream of finding a cure for cancer.

Thanks to the efforts of these people, total pledges and donations for the day exceeded \$23,400. Once again our Acton community spirit has risen to the occasion, as we continue our efforts to raise money for innovative cancer research.

We extend sincere thanks and appreciation to the following groups and individuals:

- To Acton High for the use of their facilities.

- To Acton IGA, Freezer Frenzy, Mr. Mugs, MacMillan's Frozen Foods, Leathertown Lumber, Super Sub, Fearman's Fresh Meats, Foodland, Al & Al's Meats, Acton Discount Variety, Jug City, Village Variety, Beckers, Acton Variety and Grocery, Ed's In n'

### Clarification

To the Editor,

I would like to clear up any possible misunderstanding in a recent editorial.

I am referring to the editorial by Hartley Coles titled "What about ASSIC?"

The Nov. 16 article is good and it is accurate with one small exception.

Noel Duignan, MP for North Halton, is very much aware of efforts to get a local Multi-Service Agency in Halton Hills.

Out, Lakeview Convenience, and Rolly Height for donating supplies for the food booth.

- To Jack Tanner's, Mohawk Raceway, Toronto Blue Jays, Tuitman's Garden Centre, Vito's Fruit Market, Entertainment Tonight Video and the Big Scoop for providing prizes.

- To Acton Pharmacy, Ross Ballantine, and Leathertown Feed Supply for displaying signs, and to all residents who showed their support with lawn signs.

- To all businesses who provided space for pledge sheets and posters, to Blackhawk Leather for office supplies and postage, and to Webb Kamminga for the use of a motor home.

- To all banks for processing donations.

- To all volunteers who helped throughout the day, to all who made pledges or donated directly to the Run, and to all participants who took part in the Run.

Again, thanks to everyone for your efforts in our continuous battle against cancer. We are also thankful for the memory of Terry Fox as we continue to be enriched by his example, and inspired by his courage.

*The Acton Terry Fox Run  
Committee members  
(George McPhail, Nan Hurst,  
Wally Ella, Marlene Bogart,  
Jon Hurst)*

Mr. Duignan in fact has written letters of support on our behalf to the Minister of Health, Ruth Grier. One letter was sent in April, and a more recent letter was sent after the Oct. 12 decision not to recommend a Halton Hills MSA.

The Halton Hills MSA committee appreciates the support of Mr. Duignan and all citizens of Halton Hills in our attempt to get improved long term care services to Halton Hills.

*Helen Dubeau  
Chair, Halton Hills MSA  
Committee*

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